WHIRRAKEE

October 2009 Vol. 30 No. 9

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE BENDIGO

FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc.
Address for correspondence: PO Box 396, Bendigo 3552
ISSN 0812-423X

Office Bearers for 2009 - 2010

President	Jan Orr	5443 5668
Senior Vice President	Richard Goonan	0423 418815
Junior Vice President	Matthew Comer	0409 162627
Secretary	Anne Bridley	5449 3479
Minute Secretary	Glenise Moors/Rod Orr	54396254
Treasurer	Rob Moors	54396254
Membership Officer	Anne Bridley	5449 3479
Excursion organiser	Richard Goonan	0423 418815
Syllabus organiser	Ben Goonan	
Librarian	Diana Collier (an assistant is still required)	5443 0137
Garden Convenor/Secretary	Matthew Comer	0409 162 627
Hall Management	Maurie Lewis (assisted by Rob Moors)	0407 427179
Whirrakee contact	Sabine Wilkens e-mail: s.wilkens@latrobe.edu.au	5443 2797

Membership of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club is open to all those interested in Natural History. The subscription rates are: Single $34; Family $40; Concession: Single $28.50; Family $34. *Whirrakee* subscription only is $34.

General meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. The venue for General meetings is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square. The meeting starts with a 10 minute thing-of-the night natural history segment. The invited speaker starts at 8:00pm and meetings conclude with supper. The Annual Meeting is held in September.

Committee meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm. Members of the Committee are the Office Bearer listed above and the following members: Bob Ruddick, Ben Goonan, Liz Graham, Glenise Moors, Joy Clusker, Gemma Candy

Excursions are conducted regularly and are advertised on the diary page of the *Whirrakee*. The assembly point for excursions is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, unless otherwise specified. Several interclub field naturalist campouts are held every year.

The Bendigo Field Naturalists Club has one sub-group (the Fauna Study Group) and is actively involved in local conservation issues. An **indigenous garden** has been established around the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building. Working bees are advertised on the *Whirrakee* diary page.

Fauna Study Group: meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm in the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building.

Chairman: John Burtonclay, Fadersons Lane, Mandurang (5439 5710)
Secretary: Bill Holsworth, 13 Nabilla Crs., Bendigo (5443 4063)
Equipment Officer: Maurie Lewis (0407 427179)

Bird Observing: Club members conduct regular bird surveys. Please contact Anne Bridley 5449 3479 or Glenise Moors 5439 6254 for details. Special bird observations should be reported to Anne Bridley 5449 3479.
To propose bird observing excursions please contact Kerrie Norris 5447 8017.

Front cover photo?...see page 2.

WHIRRAKEE

Monthly Newsletter of the Bendigo Field Naturalist Club

Vol. 30, No. 9, October 2009

Whirrakee takes its name from the Whirrakee Wattle (*Acacia williamsonii*) which is virtually endemic to the Bendigo region

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Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the information they use and also for any opinions expressed in their articles. Contributions will be included as soon as possible after they are received, although articles received more than one week after the monthly General Meeting will probably be too late for inclusion in the next issue of *Whirrakee*.

Articles in *Whirrakee* may be reproduced, but permission should be obtained from the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, and acknowledgment should be given to the author and the Club. Some back issues are still available on request.

Editor's Note

Most of the wattles have finished now, but other yellow flowers are coming into bloom and the bush has the yellow and purple look, characteristic for this time of the year. It is looking fantastic, the best I remember for many years. At One Tree Hill NP last weekend, patches of Wax Lip Orchids consisted not of 10 or 20, but of hundreds of flowers. The other side of the coin is that at the edges of parks, many weeds are thriving in all this early spring rain – hopefully this will not lead to serious incursions in the future.

Front Page Illustration – Photographer: Anne-Marie

In late September, Blue Squill or Blue Stars (*Chamaescilla corymbosa*) grew in profusion at South Shelbourne, along with large numbers of Golden Moth Orchids (*Diuris lanceolata*) and Yellow Bulbine Lilies (*Bulbine bulbosa*). This granite country is absolutely beautiful – for the very small things like these wildflowers and for the very large open vistas and the slightly eerie and mysterious feel one gets when walking through it. You always feel that a(nother) movie should be made there.

Short notices

Preview for October General Meeting
Wednesday, October 14 at 7.30pm

Speaker: David Cantrill:
Title: 'Charles Darwin – 150 year anniversary of the origins of species'

Thing of the Night
Matthew Comer will talk on some of the small annuals, which have appeared this spring.
Also, Kevin Walsh from the COGB will be giving an update on the Bendigo Botanic Gardens Project.

New General Meeting Starting Time
To better meet the needs of members, the doors to the clubrooms will be open from 7:10 pm onwards. Members are requested to arrive in time to be seated by 7:30 when the meeting will start.
This will enable all the essential parts of the meeting - thing of the night, the speaker, observations & general business to be concluded by 9:30pm.

North Central CMA 2009/10 Second Generation Landcare Grants
These are now open for applications and they close 23 October 2009. Application forms & guidelines available from Anne Bridley

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Hundreds of new animal species discovered in out-back Australia
More than 800 species, ranging from blind fish to diving beetles, have been discovered in caves and subterranean waters in outback Australia. The unnamed animals are among 850 new species found in a four-year study by the University of Adelaide. The species found include insects, crustaceans, spiders and worms, and are only the tip of the iceberg, scientists say. Find out more (and how to help decide on their names) at:
http://www.news.com.au/story/0,27574,26141592-5011761,00.html

Garden Working Bee

A garden working bee has been organized for Saturday 7th November and at 9am, to deal with some more of the weeds.

In December, we might have a combined hall and garden working bee, but details have not been worked out, so stay tuned.

Working bees usually go for a couple of hours (including a cuppa), though people are welcome to give whatever time they can and if they could bring gloves, secateurs, handweeding tools etc. that would be helpful. I usually bring bags and a ute to put the weeds in.

Matt Comer

Valuing the environment – have your say
What do you value in your local environment? Why do you value these places or things? The North Central Catchment Management Authority is seeking your views on the region's most valued environmental 'assets' to help prioritise future environmental funding and works.

"The North Central CMA is working with the local community and other stakeholders to develop a six-year Regional Catchment Strategy," said North Central CMA Chief Executive Officer, Damian Wells. "The first part of this process is to find out what people value in their local environment and why they value these places and things."

A series of community meetings will be held throughout the next three months to work with the regional community to identify local environmental values. **This will include a meeting in Bendigo on 11 November** linking in with the Bendigo Field Naturalists.

"The meeting in Bendigo is one of a series of meetings being held throughout North Central Victoria to identify the region's most valued

environmental places. This is part of a new process, and we will start with a blank sheet," said Mr Wells.

"The environmental sites that are identified through these community meetings will become part of a regional list used by North Central CMA and others to build projects and seek funding. There are limited funds available to protect and improve these environmental places and things, so we need to think about how we can get the best results with the limited funding available.

"Projects in some areas will be funded in the near future; others may not receive immediate funding. However, by including them on a list, we may be able to leverage various funding opportunities over the coming years," concluded Mr Wells.

The Bendigo community meeting will be held before the monthly Bendigo Field Naturalists Meeting, at the Senior Citizens Club Rooms in Golden Square from 5pm–7pm (including supper). For further information or to confirm your attendance, please contact the North Central CMA, ph: 5448 7124, email: info@nccma.vic.gov.au or visit www.nccma.vic.gov.au
RSVPs are required by Friday 30 October.

Other Regional Catchment Strategy meetings to be held in this region are:
(Kerang, Raywood, St Arnaud have already had their meetings in September)

Echuca, Monday 12 October
Time: 6pm–8.30pm (including a light dinner)
at Campaspe Shire Function Room, Echuca
Heathcote, Monday 19 October
Time: 6pm–8.30pm (including a light dinner)
Venue: Heathcote Golf Club
Maryborough, Wednesday 21 October
Time: 6pm–8.30pm (including a light dinner)
Venue: Highland Society,
35 High Street, Maryborough
Daylesford, Monday 26 October
Time: 6pm–8.30pm (including a light dinner)
Venue: Daylesford Town Hall

Charlton, Wednesday 4 November
Time: 6pm–8.30pm (including a light dinner)
Venue: East Charlton Hotel
Bendigo (in partnership with BFNC and the Bendigo Sustainability Group)
Wednesday 11 November
Time: 5pm–7pm, including light dinner
(before BFNC monthly meeting)
Venue: Golden Square Senior Citizens Hall,
Old High Street, Golden Square

Please distribute this notice throughout your networks, so we have as many people as possible come to the Bendigo meeting (and the others).

Register of Special Places
The VNPA Small Parks Project is currently seeking submissions from environment groups that may have a special area of land they would like to see investigated for inclusion in the Register of Special Places. This area of land may be proposed for either improved management or for inclusion in the reserve system or both. Each site will be assessed for inclusion in the short-listed 'Register' using the criteria:

* Remnant vegetation condition, habitat and resilience.
* Consideration of ecological processes.
* Special species, communities or other values.
* Cultural or heritage values.
* Management requirements.
* Political and social considerations.
* Threats to the site - what would happen if we did nothing?
* Corridors, stepping stones or links.

If you have a special area in mind that you would like to be considered for inclusion in the Register of Special Places or would like to discuss your idea, please contact Yasmin Kelsall 9341 6507
yasmink@vnpa.org.au.

Observations from the September General Meeting

Recorded by Jan Orr

Amanda Flower
On 29.8.2009, she saw 30 Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos at the corner of Eppalock and Axe Creek roads and recently on the 9.9.2009, at John Burtonclay's place, she heard the 'Harbinger of Spring'. It was a Pallid Cuckoo calling.

Jane Cleary
In the mild weather of the morning of 5.9.2009, she noticed a Grey Fantail in her garden at Epsom.
The Magpies in her garden were the cause of great commotion as they chose to build their nest in the tree that had long been the nest tree for the Noisy Miners, Red Wattlebirds and Blue-faced Honeyeaters.
She noticed about 18 or 20 Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos on the 7.9.2009, at around midday, flying over the St. John of God Hospital in the Specimen Hill area.
Today, the first Striated Pardalotes of the Spring have arrived in her garden.

Elaine Doling
On the 15.8.2009 the 1st young Eastern Rosella has emerged from the nest box at her home in California Gully.
The owners of 'Charter House' Runneymede (near Elmore) have lived there for more than 20 years. On the 17.8.2009, they saw Dollar Birds on their property. This has surprised them, as they have never noticed Dollar Birds there before.

John Lindner
He has been observing Eastern Rosellas in the native garden at his home in Huntly. There have been numerous birds at various times and he has been able to observe and photograph one bird in particular. On Sunday 6.9.2009, it was feeding on Eremophilas.
Eremophila glabra is a low mounded form with silvery-blue leaves an masses of tiny, erect, green flowers.
Eremophila decipiens is a shrub with green leaves and reddish flowers.
Eremophila maculata is a large shrub with large red flowers.
This particular bird plucks a flower by its base, and holding it upside-down appears to chew it. The flower is then discarded. The nipping and processing of each flower takes a second or less and many flowers are used.
John speculates that although he cannot observe it precisely, he thinks that the bird sucks out the nectar, which is present in each tubular flower. These plants are not indigenous to this area therefore the birds have learned to use them in this way.

John's Yellowtailed Black-tailed Cockatoo sightings:
19.8.2009 30+ birds, Bendigo Creek cycle path near Mantis Lane. They flew out of River Redgums and pines towards the south-west.
22.8.2009 30+ birds, Gold Leaf Court, Huntly. They flew south-east towards the Wellsford Forest.
23.8.2009 30+ birds, Gold Leaf Court Huntly. They flew over the Doc Smith Reserve.
30.8.2009 These birds were not seen, but heard, as they flew westwards.

Further Recent Bird Observations
by Glenise Moors

On returning home in early August we found our resident female Grey Shrike-thrush *(Colluricincla harmonica)* had killed herself by hitting a window. Following two weeks of incessant calling, we noticed the male had a new partner. On a very wet day I watched as the female pulled curved pieces of bark from the trunk of a Golden Wattle – she didn't pick up any from the ground. The nest was renovated. It is on a rock platform built onto our house especially for them. She is now sitting on three eggs. The pair of birds only rear young every few years as the local Brown Goshawk *(Accipiter fasciatus)* takes the young just before they leave the nest.

On 3.9.2009 two Jacky Winters *(Microeca leucophaea)* appeared in the grey box trees behind our house. They appeared to be checking out horizontal branches for a nest site. At this time there were four species of cuckoo present – Fan-tailed, Pallid, Shining Bronze and Horsfield's Bronze. One of the Jacky Winters chased away a Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo then both 'Jackies' left soon after. This species was more common locally before the drought in the early 1980s. I remember observing a pair nesting and being hassled by a Black-eared Cuckoo. One bird stayed on the nest while the other chased the cuckoo. The cuckoo was almost sitting beside the nest at times. According to "The Atlas of Australian Birds" this cuckoo parasitizes hosts that build dome-shaped nests. The Jacky Winter usually builds a cup-shaped nest in the "Y" of a horizontal branch some distance from the trunk.

September Annual General Meeting
Election of office bearers and nominations of members for the committee and positions of responsibility:

Office Bearers

President:	Jan Orr	
Nominated:	Rob Moors	
Seconded:	Elvyne Hogan	Carried
Vice President:	Richard Goonan	
Nominated:	Jane Cleary	
Seconded:	Elvyne Hogan	Carried
Junior Vice President:	Matthew Comer	
Nominated:	Richard Goonan	
Seconded:	Rob Moors	Carried
Secretary:	Anne Bridley	
Nominated:	Bob Ruddick	
Seconded:	Matthew Comer	Carried
Treasurer:	Rob Moors	
Nominated:	Jane Cleary	
Seconded:	Lyn Hamilton	Carried

Committee

Glenise Moors (Immediate Past President)
Lizzie Graham (Nominated: Anne Bridley)
Bob Ruddick (Nominated: Jane Cleary)
Ben Goonan (Nominated: Richard Goonan)
Joy Clusker (Nominated: Bob Ruddick)
...also Gemma Candy

Positions of Responsibility

Whirrakee editor:	Sabine Wilkens
Syllabus co-ordinator:	Ben Goonan
Hall manager:	Maurie Lewis
Assistant hall manager:	Rob Moors
Membership officer:	Anne Bridley
Librarian:	Diana Collier

Whirrakee mail-out co-ordinator: Rod Orr
Minute secretaries: Rod Orr & Glenise Moors
Garden co-ordinator: Matthew Comer

Treasurer's Report 2008/2009
Rob Moors presented the 2008/2009 treasurer's report. This report will not be published in the *Whirrakee* this year, but members are welcome to request a copy for inspection. Please let Rob know if you'd like a copy.

President's Report 2008/2009
Glenise Moors

Ben Goonan has been organizing speakers for our meetings this year.
In October, Paul Foley spoke about 'Our First 50 Years in Space', a fascinating evening topic. At the November meeting, Dr. Jim Radford reported on 'Woodland Birds and Their Habitat Requirements', which unfortunately, are not being met today. Our December shared meal and break-up evening was enjoyable as we had time to chat. This was followed by Peter Ellis demonstrating instruments and speaking about Folk Music. In February, Nick Roberts, a VNPA officer with the VEAC process, spoke about 'Establishing Corridor Links between Remnant Vegetation in South-eastern Australia. In March, Alan Yen firstly told us of research being undertaken to understand The Effect of Fire on Invertebrates, then about Nutrition and Cultural Barriers to Eating Insects. Lynda Chambers addressed us in May about The Effect of Climate Change on Flora and Fauna and the necessity for long term monitoring. Our member, Richard Goonan's topic for June was, 'What Happened to Our Creek-line Grassy

Woodlands'. For July, Nick Clemann spoke on 'Snake Management in Victoria. In August, Sean Dooley raced us around Australia and explained how he observed 700 species of birds in 12 months.

Thing of the Night.
October – A plant with a BFNC History – King Orchid – Rod Orr
November – Birds in Rosiland Park aviary, 1893 – Janice Orr; and Eltham Copper Butterfly at Big Hill – John Burtonclay.
February – Observations from members on how fauna reacted to the recent high temperatures (2 ½ weeks) – Glenise Moors.
March – Proposed restoration and extension of Bendigo Botanic Gardens – Janice Orr.
April – History and achievements of Eaglehawk Environment Group – Bob Ruddick.
July – Three small stripy birds - Anne Bridley

Maurie Lewis has continued to inspect the mammal boxes when required.

Recently, interesting *excursions* have taken place as flora and fauna has been mapped along the Great Dividing Trail.

This year, we have been saddened by the passing of Clive Fisher and Darren Green.

Members have represented our club at *community and inter-club activities* such as SEANA camp-outs held at Healesville and Port Fairy, biannual bird surveys for the Water Treatment Plant, biannual Swift Parrot survey and several Spring in the Bendigo Bush activities. Several members have been involved in local issues, writing submissions and letters, attending meetings and lobbying politicians. A major issue continues to be the fuel reduction burning of local bushland. Some members are busy with the restoration of the Bendigo Botanic Gardens. A dedicated group of members prepare the newsletter for posting after Sabine has produced it. The meeting hall floor has been rejuvenated and heating upgraded with several safety issues resolved. The bookings and maintenance have been ably carried out by Maurie, with club members having their annual working-bee to tidy up. The indigenous garden required regular weeding with Matthew at the helm of a small group. Diana, the librarian, displayed our books and encouraged members to borrow them more frequently.

I would like to thank everyone who helped with various activities of the club during the year. I have especially appreciated support from the office bearers and committee members.

Report of further Great Dividing Trail Excursions

Author: Anne Bridley

Spring Gully 15/8/09 9:20 to 13:00

Present: Anne Bridley, Matt Comer, Joy Clusker, Ben Goonan, Lizzie Graham.

We followed the trail from the car park on Shelton's Rd, across Diamond Hill Rd and Burns St to where we stopped last time, a few hundred metres north of Burns St.

The forest here is mainly Ironbarks, with the addition of Mealy Bundy, Red Stringybark and Ironbark. Major shrubs include Rough Wattle, Golden Wattle and Spreading Wattle. The ground between Sheltons and Diamond Hill Rds is highly disturbed, with many bare patches. So it was a pleasant surprise to find Tiny, Swan, Dwarf and Tall Greenhood Orchids in dips where litter had accumulated. There were also a wide variety of weeds, including a number of garden escapes, until we reached the area north of Burns St where there is a dense low understorey growing along the ridge. A highlight of the morning was a group of a dozen Tall Greenhoods. Also flowering were Golden Wattle, Gold-dust Wattle, Leopard Orchids, Tiny Stars, Early Nancy, Scented Sundew, dillwynias, Common Hovea. Unlike the previous month, very few fungi were seen. The bird highlight was a Scarlet Robin.

Diamond Hill 13/9/09 9:30 - 12:45

Present: Anne. Bridley, Sue Beattie, Gemma Candy, Matt Comer, Joy Clusker, Richard Goonan, Lizzie Graham, John Lindner, Kerrie Norris.

The Trail runs here between Sheltons Rd and the powerlines near Kangaroo Gully Rd. The weather became very warm by midday and a good display of wildflower was seen, though a number of plants that were flowering well the previous month such as Dwarf Greenhoods and Scented Sundews had finished.

The dominant trees here are Ironbarks on the north facing slopes with Mealy Bundy appearing mainly in the gullies. Grey Box was found lower down. The shrub layer contained a scattered mixture of Hedge Wattle, Golden Wattle, some Drooping Cassinia, patches of Bushy Needlewood and a belt of Totem Poles. Except for the slope nearest Sheltons Rd and some areas of major mining disturbance, the ground was generally well covered with a mixture of Black-anther Flax-lily, Fairy Wax-flower, Gold-dust Wattle, other low shrubs, some native grasses and lichen. Small seedlings were observed, and there were number of small annuals. These latter posed quite a challenge to identify.

The south west slope down to the power lines is a little different to the rest, the trees being mainly Mealy Bundy with a heathy understorey containing Daphne Heath, the rare Goldfield Grevillea (*Grevillea dryophylla*) and Pink Bells.

Floral highlights were many Waxlip orchids, a large patch of Nodding Greenhoods, Tall and Climbing Sundews, Fairy Waxflower, Milkmaids and Pink Bells. Near Shelton's Rd we found a deep red Cat's-claws Grevillea. Shining Bronze-cuckoos were calling prominently and a pair of Brown Goshawks was seen flying low over nearby tree tops.

There is a problem with rubbish dumping in this area and some illegal removal of larger Ironbarks.

In October and November we will walk between Kangaroo Gully Rd and Sandhurst Reservoir.

A list of flora and fauna for the part of the GDT we covered this year will be published after the November excursion.

Details of the next (October) excursion is given below:

Saturday 17 October 8:30am - 12:30pm
Great Dividing Trail Flora and Fauna Mapping.
Meet at the clubrooms for car pooling. Please note the earlier starting time. We will be doing the GDT south of Kangaroo Gully Rd. Bring binoculars, notebook, GPS, camera, morning tea.

Contact: Anne Bridley 55493479.
For a report on the first excursion, see August *Whirrakee*, pages 7-9.

September General Meeting – Speaker: Eric Wilkinson 'Geology and vegetation of the Bendigo area'

Author: Sabine Wilkens

Eric Wilkinson joined the Geological Survey Office in 1969, when he came to Bendigo as the district geologist. The job has a romantic and old-fashioned ring about it, and the work – clambering over the countryside, updating geological maps from the past century sounds even more romantic. I am sure if wasn't always so. Eric was mostly working on his own, snakebites and other accidents in the middle of nowhere were always a possibility. There were no mobile phones around then.... Forgetting his lunch was often a reality.

Soil type was one characteristic that had to be mapped (a fierce debate at the time was about what was the greater influence on the top soil,

the bed rock or the climate – nowadays most people agree that both play important roles). It is not always easy to see the soil and rock below, but geologists use all sorts of tricks to see what they need to see, like looking at the spoil heap from a recent dam excavation, amongst the roots of a recently fallen tree or at road cuttings.

The result of such mapping in captured in geological maps, and Eric showed us the one for Victoria. The oldest Victorian rock is Cambrian Greenstone (500-650 million years old); these rocks originated from ancient marine deposits and locally can be seen, for example, at Heathcote, Lady's Pass and Rochester Quarry. Such country is prone to landslips, especially if tampered with by agriculture. In the much folded and distorted rocks of Bendigo the age of these formations can be determined by the graptolites found within them. At Victoria Hill, miners used to talk about the rock they brought up from 100s of feet below ground, as 'the blue' which describes the true colour of these rocks (the ones on the surface are all highly oxidised).

Ordovician rock is 'younger', about 400 million years old. In the district, Stringy Bark predominates on the oldest of these. The Whipstick has it as its bedrock.

The end of the Ordovician and beginning of the Silurian, was a major mountain building period, while the Early Devonian is characterised by granite intrusions. Such intrusions are like volcanoes underground. The molten rock moves slowly upwards, but never reaches the surface. As the body cools, cracks develop horizontally and vertically and these get infiltrated by water and begin to weather. If the vertical cracks are close together, fragmented small pieces result, that collapse in a pile, once erosion exposes them. However, if the vertical cracks are several meters apart, erosion of the surroundings leaves granite pillars, or tors, standing in the landscape.

Where the molten rock pushes through the sedimentary rock, the rock at the boundary becomes modified and much hardened and forms a metamorphic aureole. The Big Hill Range is a wonderful example of this. The whole of Mt Alexander was a big intrusion, which would have had a kilometre of rock above it, once it cooled. Another interesting phenomenon that happens along with such intrusions are xenoliths, foreign inclusions. When the hot rock body makes contact with the surrounding rock, bits fall into the semi-molten rock and harden without melting themselves.

Our very own local metamorphic aureole (Big Hill) is witness to the extent of the influence of the intruding body that was to become Mt Alexander. Mount Moligul is a small version of this with its own metamorphic aureole and so are Mt Korong and Mt Kooyoora. During Tertiary influxes of the sea into this area, these hills would have all been islands.

Pink Cliffs at Heathcote is an example of deeply weathered granite material. The vegetation that grows in granite country, is good at exploiting the cracks that have formed through weathering. Long Leaf Box and Murray pines are characteristic trees of the district's granite hills.

By this geological time, one slide carousel had finished and there was a second one ready to go! The speaker, however, decided that members had enough for the night. There was a lot of interest amongst the members in seeing the second half (we don't get many geological speakers), so when Peter Ellis thanked him, Eric promised to return next year. Eric has had a very long association with the BFNC, but I did not realise that he actually started off the *Whirrakee*. Did you?

It was a great talk and I will bring along some of the students for the second half, for sure.

From the Mailbag

by Elaine Mathison

Each month the club receives a number of newsletters and magazines: some by subscription and some in exchange for Whirrakee. These are available from the club library.

THE VICTORIAN NATURALIST(FNCV)
June 2009

"Once in the suburbs: some historical notes on bird watching and collecting in Melbourne" Observations of birdlife were made from the beginning of European settlement. A more complete picture emerged from the 1880s when the FNCV began.

"Food resources and urban colonization by lorikeets and parrots": results of a short term study of the foraging activities of Rainbow and Musk Lorikeets and Red-rumped Parrots in Melbourne parklands.

"Surviving urbanization: maintaining bird species diversity in urban Melbourne" reports that streetscape vegetation plays a significant part in influencing the types of birds found in urban areas.

* * * * * * *

Also received recently:

***Plains Wanderer** (Echuca BOCA)

***Castlemaine Naturalist**

***The Ballarat Naturalist**

***The Geelong Naturalist**

THE BIRD OBSERVER(BOCA)
June 2009

**This edition highlights the effects of fires, floods and very hot weather on birds and their habitat.

- Birds after wildfire: the immediate impact has been severe in many areas. Long term recovery depends on many factors: vegetation regrowth and weather conditions are very closely linked. Likely trends are outlined.

- Flood, Fire and Heat: members' observations from the Townsville area, the Yarra Valley and Wilsons Promontory. The effect of the extreme heat on birds was noted in many parts of Victoria.

August 2009

Conservation: reports on

- Threatened Species Legislation
- Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo
- Glossy Black-Cockatoo
- Chiltern Quarry, Victoria

- Monitoring Malleefowl in Victoria: a summary of surveys which have taken place over a number of years, with particular reference to the effect of weather.

- Paradise Lost – forever?: Len Robinson recalls the first time he saw the Orange-bellied Parrot in 1949 and reflects on events since.

- Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo: over the last 50 years loss and fragmentation of habitat has led to a big decline in the species' abundance in south-west Western Australia.

* * * * * * *

Diary

The General, Bird Observers Group and Fauna Study Group meetings are held at the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square, unless otherwise indicated.

General Meetings

Wednesday October 14 **7.30pm**
David Cantrill: 'Charles Darwin – 150 year anniversary of the origins of species'.

Wednesday, November 11 **7.30pm**
Eris O'Brien: 'Native locusts in native grassland'

Wednesday, December 9 **6.30pm**
Christmas Dinner – speaker to be confirmed

Excursions

Saturday 17 October **8:30am - 12:30pm**
Great Dividing Trail Flora and Fauna Mapping.
Meet at the clubrooms for car pooling. Please note the earlier starting time. We will be doing the GDT south of Kangaroo Gully Rd. Bring binoculars, notebook, GPS, camera, morning tea.
Contact: Anne Bridley 55493479.
For a report on the first excursion, see August *Whirrakee*, pages 7-9.

Fauna Group

This group normally meets (in the clubrooms) on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm. New and seasoned Club members are most welcome to attend.

Garden Working Bee

A garden working bee has been organized for Saturday 7th November and at 9am, to deal with some more of the weeds.
For details see page 3.

Wildlife Rescue & Information Network Inc.

W.R.I.N. is an organisation dedicated to the care of orphaned, sick or injured native animals. It is fully endorsed by the Dept of Sustainability and Environment.
Please call our Emergency Number for Help for Fauna in Need. Phone: 0419 356433.

Friday 9th October - Eucalypts - 8pm
Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club monthly meeting. Uniting Church hall, off Lyttleton Street, Castlemaine. Presentation by local legend **Ern Perkins** – A celebration of Eucalypts. All welcome. Supper by donation.

Sunday 18th October - Forest Creek Track
Friends of The Box-Ironbark Forests (Mt Alexander Region) Bushwalk
This walk will start in Chewton and follow Forest Creek through to Expedition Pass Reservoir using the Forest Creek Track and boardwalks allowing all year access. It will highlight the cultural and environmental history as well as the recent partnerships that have attempted to restore the balance between humans and nature. c. 9km.
Meet 9.30am outside 30 Templeton St Castlemaine and carpool to the start of the walk. Bring water, morning tea and lunch. Walks normally finish mid afternoon. Non-members welcome. No cost.
Information: Marie Jones 5472 2892.

Centre for Environmental Management 2009 Research Seminar Series (held at the University of Ballarat)
The speaker at the seminar will be Rod Fensham (Queensland Herbarium). Rod will be speaking on "Water-remoteness to manage grazing pressure in arid Australia", more detail can be found at:
http://www.ballarat.edu.au/ard/sci-eng/biodiversity_conf/seminar.shtml
Date/Time: **23 October. 2009**, 12:00 - 1:30
Venue: F301, Mt Helen Campus, University of Ballarat
A light lunch will be provided so could you please RSVP on or before 16th October.